

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (Currently Amended). A method of altering gene expression in a population of human embryonic stem cells, with a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by means of electroporation, without affecting the pluripotent character of the cells, comprising:

introducing a polynucleotide into the population of human embryonic stem cells by transfection in the presence of at least one transfection reagent selected from the group consisting of a cationic non-lipid polymer reagent, a non-liposomal reagent, and a cationic lipid agent, wherein said polynucleotide ~~is operably linked to a promoter and contains a~~ gene expression altering sequence so that gene expression in the embryonic stem cells ~~prior to~~ after introducing the polynucleotide ~~is~~ becomes measurably different from gene expression ~~after prior to~~ introducing the polynucleotide ~~while retaining the pluripotent character of the cells,~~ wherein the transfection reagent is one that provides a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by electroporation, and wherein the polynucleotide introduced into the human embryonic stem cells does not contain viral genes.

2 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression altering sequence is an enhancer sequence for modulating gene expression in the population of embryonic stem cells.

3 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression altering sequence is a gene encoding a protein and said protein is not expressed in the population of embryonic stem cells in the absence of the polynucleotide.

4 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 3, wherein the protein is selected from the group consisting of a fluorescent protein and an antibiotic resistance protein.

5 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 4, wherein the fluorescent protein is selected from the group consisting of green fluorescent protein, lacZ, firefly Rennila protein, luciferase, red cyan protein and yellow cyan protein.

6 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 4, wherein the antibiotic resistance protein is selected from the group consisting of hygromycin, neomycin, zeocin and puromycin.

7 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein said transfection reagent is a cationic non-lipid polymer transfection reagent.

8 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein said transfection reagent is a non-liposomal transfection reagent.

9 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein said transfection reagent is a cationic lipid reagent.

10 (Cancelled)

11 (Currently Amended). A method of altering gene expression in a population of human embryonic stem cells, with a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by means of electroporation, comprising:

introducing a DNA sequence into the population of human embryonic stem cells by transfection in the presence of a cationic polymer reagent, wherein said DNA ~~is operably linked to a promoter and corresponding sequence~~ corresponds to at least one of an enhancer, a promoter, and a gene so as to alter gene expression in the population of embryonic cells in an amount to permit cells containing the DNA sequence to be distinguished from cells absent the DNA sequence, wherein the cationic polymer reagent is one that provides a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by electroporation,

and wherein the DNA sequence introduced into the human embryonic stem cells does not contain viral genes.

12 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 11, wherein the DNA sequence corresponds to a gene and the gene encodes a protein selected from the group consisting of a fluorescent protein, a suicide gene, and an antibiotic resistance protein.

13 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 11, wherein the DNA sequence comprises a promoter ~~is~~ selected from the group consisting of rex-1, oct-4, oct-6, SSEA-3, SSEA-4, TRA1-60, TR1-81, GCTM-2, alkaline phosphatase, and Hes 1 promoters.

14 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 12, wherein the fluorescent protein is selected from the group consisting of green fluorescent protein, lacZ, firefly Rennila protein, luciferase, red cyan protein and yellow cyan protein.

15 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 12, wherein the protein is an antibiotic resistance protein and the antibiotic resistance protein is selected from the group consisting of hygromycin, neomycin, zeocin and puromycin.

16 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 12, wherein the DNA corresponds to a suicide gene and

the suicide gene is an inducible apoptotic gene or encodes a protein selected from the group consisting of ~~herpes simplex thymidine kinase~~, inducible Diphtheria toxin, and bacterial cytosine deaminase.

17 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 11, wherein the DNA sequence causes a knockout of a genomic sequence, the genomic sequence being selected from the group consisting of beta 2 microglobulin, HLA-1, HLA-2 and an INF receptor gene sequence.

18-56 (Cancelled)

57-58 (Not Entered)

59 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 1, further comprising selecting and verifying that the population is a substantially pure population of stably transfected pluripotent hES cell with the gene expression altering sequence.

60 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 7, wherein the expression altering sequence is a gene encoding a protein and said protein is not expressed in the population of embryonic stem cells in the absence of the polynucleotide.

61 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 11, wherein said DNA sequence is a gene encoding a

protein and said protein is not expressed in the population of embryonic stem cells in the absence of the DNA sequence.

62 (Currently Amended). A method of altering gene expression in a population of human embryonic stem cells, with a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by means of electroporation, without affecting the pluripotent character of the cells, comprising:

introducing a polynucleotide into the population of human embryonic stem cells by transfection in the presence of a cationic non-lipid polymer transfection reagent, wherein said polynucleotide ~~is operably linked to a promoter and~~ contains a gene expression altering sequence so that gene expression in the embryonic stem cells ~~prior to~~ after introducing the polynucleotide ~~is~~ becomes measurably different from gene expression ~~after~~ prior to introducing the polynucleotide ~~while retaining the pluripotent character of the cells,~~ wherein said transfection reagent provides a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by electroporation, and wherein the polynucleotide introduced into the human embryonic stem cells does not contain viral genes.

63 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 62, wherein the expression altering sequence ~~is~~ comprises a gene encoding a protein and said protein is not

expressed in the population of embryonic stem cells in the absence of the polynucleotide.

64 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 63, wherein the protein is selected from the group consisting of a fluorescent protein and an antibiotic resistance protein.

65 (New). A method for transfecting human embryonic stem cells without affecting the pluripotent character of the cells, comprising:

transfecting human embryonic stem cells with a polynucleotide in the presence of at least one transfection reagent selected from the group consisting of a cationic non-lipid polymer reagent, a non-liposomal reagent, and a cationic lipid agent, wherein the transfection reagent is one that provides a transfection efficiency greater than that obtainable by electroporation, and wherein the polynucleotide introduced into the human embryonic stem cells does not contain viral genes.

66 (New). The method according to claim 65, wherein said transfection reagent is a cationic non-lipid polymer transfection reagent.

67 (New). A method in accordance with claim 65, wherein said polynucleotide comprises a gene encoding a

protein and said protein is not expressed in the population of embryonic stem cells in the absence of the polynucleotide.

68 (New). The method according to claim 67, wherein the protein is selected from the group consisting of a fluorescent protein and an antibiotic resistance protein.

69(New). A method in accordance with claim 65, wherein said transfection reagent is a cationic polymer.

70 (New). A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said transfection reagent is a cationic polymer.